up to screen the irrational formualtions in consultation with experts reviews and recommends from time to time weeding out formulations considered either harmful or irrational.

(d) After sanction for release of funds is accorded, the scheme will be put into operation.

RIDN facility in Andhra Pradesh

2767. SHRI GOPALA RAO RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to bring some districts in Andhra Pradesh under the coverage of Rural Integrated Digital Network (RIDN); and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the names of the districts proposed to be covered under the RIDN alongwith the likely date by which they would be so covered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 'Khammam' District in A.P. has been selected for implementation of IDN Scheme within the 7th Five Year Plan subject to availability of equipment. The scheme envisages complete digitalisation of local exchange and transmission equipment in the District. It will provide inter-dialling facility amongst all the exchanges in the district.

Seatmen recruitment centre at Calcutta

2768. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the seamen recruitment centre at Calcutta is being wound up;

(b) whether the post of Director in the Seamen's Employment Office through whom Seamen are being recruited has not been filled up since November, 1986, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the reasons for abolishing the post of Principal Seamen's Welfare Officer, since 1985;

(d) whether there has been failure to implement the tripartite agreementt on job distribution at the rate of 70 per cent and 30 per cent between Bombay and Calcutta respectively since 27th March, 1973, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether it is a fact that the Government failed to accord due representation to the recognised Forward Seamen's Union of India in the various Statutory bodies like National Seamen's Welfare Board, Seafarers Welfare Fund Society, National Maritime Day Celebration Committee, National Maritime Board (India)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) A reference has already been made to the Union Public Service Commission for convening the Departmental Promotion Committee's meeting for selection for the post of Director, Seamen's Employment Office, Calcutta which is vacant since January, 1987.

(c) The post of Principal Seamen's Welfare Officer, not only at Calcutta but also at Bombay has been abolished as per the economy measures. The duties of the officers are being performed by the Shipping Masters at both the places.

(d) Efforts were made to get the Seamen's unions at Bombay and Calcutta to

agree to a percentage distribution of jobs between Bombay seamen and Calcutta seamen with a view to solving problems of unemployment at Calcutta. A meeting was held by Director General of Shipping on 27-3-1973 with the representatives of shipowners and seamen unions of Bombay/ Calcutta. In the meeting it was considered that in future in case of every new ship efforts should be made to take more crew from Calcutta as far as possible with a view to reach and maintain the rate of 70 : 30 between Bombay and Calcutta. However, the Bombay union did not agree to this formula.

(e) The representation on National Welfare Board for Seafarers which is a statutory body, is governed by the National Welfare Board for Seafarers Rules, 1963. The rules provide for two representatives of seafarers on the Board. One member from the majority seamen's union and the other from the officers union are appointed on the Board.

The reconstitution of the Seafarers Welfare Fund Society is under consideration. However, the recognition period of the F.S.U.I. has expired early 1987. Ministry of Labour has been requested to conduct fresh verification of membership of seamen's unions for recognition purpose.

As regards, National Maritime Day Celebration Committee, seamen unions are free to approach the Chairman of the local Committee for representation.

The National Maritime Board (India) is a bipartite body of seafarers and shipowners and it is for the shipowners to decide which union is most representative of Indian ratings for the purpose of recognition and collection bargaining.

Violation of statutory provisions of Merchant Shipping Act, 1958

2769. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether complaints of violation of statutory provisions of Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 which extends minimum rights to the seamen have been received by Government authorities and the shipowners from Forward Seamen's Union of India (Calcutta);

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to stop such violations;

(c) whether it is a fact that the decisions of statutory Tripartite Board of Seamen's Employment Board are being violated and that no meeting of the said board was held since August 1986 despite the fact that the rules stipulate such meetings to be held every three months;

(d) whether it is also a fact that despite a High Court's verdict so far no tribunal has been set up by Government for implementation of agreement with National Maritime Board regarding overtime allowance and retention allowances to seamen; and

(e) what steps Government are taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) Unless the nature of violations of statutory provisions of Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 are quoted specifically, it is not possible to indicate the action taken to stop such alleged violations.

(c) The contents of the question pertaining to violation of Seamen's Employment Board decisions are too vague to identify which decisions of the Board are referred to. The reasons for not holding the Seamen's Employment Board meeting after August, 1986 are the non-congenial